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DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: TIP IN TURKEY: TURKISH MEDIA ATTENTION, January 16-31, 2006

[11.](#) In response to G/TIP inquiries, national and international media sources published the following news articles about TIP in Turkey. Text of articles originally published in Turkish is provided through unofficial Embassy translation.

[12.](#) Published by Sabah on Tuesday, January 17:

TITLE: Trip to Hope - by Erdal Safak

BEGIN TEXT: Human trafficking is one of the most shameful things in our century, but it is also one of the most profitable illegal activities. The camp in Edirne reflects the images of the immigrant trafficking victims. There is also a human trafficking aspect for which we need to pursue the traces in big cities.

Poverty and hunger, as well as wars, in Asia and Africa, and unemployment in the former eastern bloc countries led millions of people to the roads. Human smuggling, one of the most shameful activities of our century, emerged. Criminal organizations earn around \$10 billion annually. Human trafficking is more profitable than drug trafficking.

Many organizations in Turkey, from the PKK to the Mafia, control an important part of this trade. Turkey signed all international agreements on human trafficking. Also, the Turkish Penal Code that went into effect last June foresees heavier sanctions for traffickers. But despite these sanctions, neither immigrant smuggling nor human trafficking can be prevented because Turkey is a source, destination and a transit country. In other words, while some of our citizens try to travel abroad illegally, we are on the path of hundreds of thousands of people from Africa and the Far East who want to travel to Europe. Those who are kidnapped or brought in secretly from the Balkans and the Caucasus also constitute a market. Some of them work in the prostitution sector, others as household help.

Former Labor Minister Yasar Okuyan, in 2000, announced that the number of foreigners who were secretly employed in Turkey was one million.

The EU Justice and Interior Ministers, at their meeting in Vienna on Friday, agreed to increase the authority of the "European Joint Police" and, in particular, in border security against illegal immigration. END TEXT.

[13.](#) Reporter/Columnist Savas Ay visited Edirne and met with some illegal immigrants kept in that province. He wrote a three-part series on immigrant smuggling and human trafficking in Sabah on January 17 through 19. Following are highlights from that series:

BEGIN TEXT: January 17:

- Human trafficking is a global problem. It imposes a heavy social, economic and humanitarian burden on countries.
- In 2005, only in Edirne, more than 10,000 fugitives from 40 countries were captured at the border with Greece and Bulgaria.
- In the past 15 years, 400 illegal immigrants, who were trying to either enter or leave Turkey, drowned in the Meric River. None of the bodies were claimed by their relatives or consulates. Indeed, most of them did not have a passport or ID. The Edirne Municipality buried the dead in certain quarters in the city cemetery or in Ipsala.
- The largest area where these illegal immigrants are kept is in the old Tunca Barracks. As I was touring the site, some officials warned me by saying that it might not be safe for me to wander around, and also I might be infected with lice or start itching. There is open sewage dripping inside and recently 14 people fled the site by digging a hole in the wall.
- The Mafia earns around \$7 billion annually from human smuggling. Turkey is one of the main arteries of this bloody, dark and dangerous traffic. What I saw was a human tragedy and a shame for humanity.
- Edirne Police Chief Hanefi Avci noted that he spent approximately 600 thousand TL in ten months to feed and meet the needs of these people. He noted that they had 500

refugees from 40 countries, including Pakistan, Somalia, Mauritania and Iraq, who needed to be deported. He said that they were deporting refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan from Agri. Now we are not deporting and maybe their number might exceed 2000.

- "Have You Seen My Mother?" is a 30-second film that will be shown in movie theatres and TV in February. According to IOM (The International Office for Migration), one of every three human trafficking victims is a mother. So the IOM found four kids whose mothers were kidnapped in Turkey to appear in this film. They were taught Turkish. Three of them are boys aged between 10 and 16 and one of them is a four-year-old girl. It was shot in Moldova and demonstrates the plight of families and children. The Trabzon, Izmir and Antalya metropolitan municipalities are supporting the campaign. The Ankara Metropolitan Municipality will put campaign posters on 700 buses and the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality on 500 buses. They will also support the campaign with their billboards.

January 18:

- The British police captured a 19-member gang during the "Blue Sky" operation a few months ago. They raided 12 offices and houses in London and Lincolnshire. The gang was earning around 3,000-5,000 pounds Sterling from each illegal immigrant. They were brought into the country in 20-person groups after voyages that sometimes lasted months.
- I visited the Acisu Cemetery in Edirne. An official showed me where they buried these illegal immigrants. Most of them were buried without proper religious ceremonies.
- The Mafia that was involved in immigrant trafficking was earning around 2-3 billion dollars in the early 1990s. Meanwhile, western countries lowered their quotas for immigrants. Thus, the cost of illegal immigration went up. Now the Mafia earns around 7 billion dollars annually from this dirty trade. The Mafia organizations have members from all countries.
- Those who send immigrants by boat earn around one million dollars per vessel.
- According to the Smuggling and Organized Crime Department of the Jandarma, human smuggling is an ever-growing sector. No country alone can prevent it by itself.
- Depending on their destination and itinerary, immigrants pay around 3,000 to 7,000 Euros each.
- According to Turkish National Police officials, the number of illegal immigrants in Istanbul alone is around one million. Most of them are from Asia. Then come Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

January 19:

- Turkey has been exposed intensively to illegal immigration because of its geographic location between the source countries in the east and the destination countries in the west.
- We all know that illegal immigrants follow an itinerary that passes through either Istanbul or other provinces on the shore. So the controls are very tight.
- Officials said that these immigrants certainly do not travel by themselves and that illegal criminal organizations help them in return for 3,000 to 5,000 dollars. Turkey captured tens of thousands of illegal immigrants and organizers. It is known that these organizers are also linked to the PKK terrorist organization and to drug traffickers.
- It costs 8,000 pounds Sterling for an illegal immigrant to travel from Afghanistan, Iraq or Pakistan to Britain. It costs 6,000 pounds Sterling to France and 4,000 to Greece. The approximate fee for traveling from Africa to Europe is 6,000 to 8,000 dollars. Meanwhile, travel to the U.S. and Australia cost the most, 15,000 to 20,000 dollars.
- The first allotment, which is a quarter of the fee, is paid, say in Afghanistan. When the person reaches Iran, his family is informed and family members pay the smugglers the second quarter of the total fee. When illegal immigrants reach the third phase, that is Turkey, Greece or Bulgaria, the third allotment is paid. Once they reach the destination, they pay the remaining quarter.
- If an illegal immigrant is captured at one of these stages and returned home, then smugglers do not charge him for the same portion in their second attempt. END TEXT.

14. Published by Sabah on Tuesday, January 17:

TITLE: "Have you seen my mother?"

BEGIN TEXT: The United Nations International Office for Migration (IOM), has laid out the tragic truth of trafficking in women. UN research shows that one out of every three foreign women abducted and forced into prostitution is a mother. A new campaign called "Have you seen my mother?" has begun. Short footage films prepared by the UN will take attention with the "mother-child drama."

Three women in 1 a mother.

IOM, in starting a campaign to prevent human trafficking, has revealed that one in every three foreign women forced into prostitution is a mother. The Organization took up the issue in its 2005 Human Trafficking Trends report and, with a campaign to begin in February, the drama of the children left behind of mothers who have been kidnapped by gangs will be shown. The report tells the stories of the children whose mothers, mostly from northern countries, were kidnapped and brought to Turkey. The report stressed that these women, due to poverty, cannot take care of their own children and are duped into accepting child-minder positions. Furthermore, the report said, the Mafia takes their passports and threatens to kill the women's children while locking the women up and forcing them into prostitution.

IOM, in order to increase public sensitivity and show the bitter truth, have gone into action by showing a short film on television and in cinemas. In the American- and several film company-sponsored film, four children whose mothers were kidnapped and sent to Turkey took lead roles. The slogan "Have you seen my mother?" is used.

The film on TV and billboard notices

The film, shot in Moldova, stresses the drama of children who are left behind and families that are torn apart due to trafficking in persons. The 30-second film will be shown first in Turkey, then Moldova, and then other countries where trafficking is heavy. The municipalities of Trabzon, Izmir and Antalya, where the concentration of working foreign women is, have been supportive. The Ankara Metropolitan Municipality will post notices on 700 buses and the Istanbul Municipality on 500. There will also be billboards. The film was shot in a village in Moldova from where trafficked women came. The film, made by an IOM team, was financed by the USG. The film crew first chose the children and then taught the four children Turkish. Three boys, aged 10-16 and a four-year-old girl from the poverty-stricken village took leading roles. END TEXT.

15. Published by Milliyet on Monday, January 23:

TITLE: Visa scandal tied to Turkish businesswoman

BEGIN TEXT: The explosive scandal involving visa selling by Austrian representatives in several countries has also affected the Austrian Embassy in Ankara.

The investigating commission, which uncovered the visas for money scandal in Hungary, Serbia and Ukraine at the Austrian embassies, also reported that, "between 2003 and 2004, an Austrian diplomat working at the embassy in Ankara sold visas for money."

The unnamed person who worked in the Austrian Embassy in Ankara has been arrested and an investigation into the person's background has begun.

It has been asserted that the embassy official involved in this visa scandal, a Turkish businesswoman living in Vienna, provided false guarantee documents and shared in the money. A case has been opened and charges of trafficking in persons and being a member of an organized crime network have been filed against the 33-year-old unnamed Turkish businesswoman.

According to the report issued by the commission established to unearth the visa scandal in Austria in the middle of last year, Foreign Minister Plassnig may be held accountable and questioned in front of the parliamentary investigation committee if she is proved to be responsible for the visa scandal. END TEXT.

16. Published by Aksam on Saturday, January 28:

TITLE: Anchovies vs. Condoms

BEGIN TEXT: Along with the opening of the Sarp Border in 1989 and the spread of prostitution came many communicable diseases. The rate of sexually transmitted Hepatitis B and C in the Black Sea is higher than the Turkish average. The average rate of Hepatitis B is six percent, while in the Black Sea region it is eight percent. The rate of Hepatitis C is two percent nationwide, and three percent in the Black Sea region. According to Dr. Mustafa Torun of the AIDS Research Association, the rates of these types of illnesses increase every day. Ignorance had an effect

on the spread of these illnesses.

Dr. Torun said, "The most important thing to the increases is the transmission within families. Couples do not take tests before they enter into relations, nor do they protect themselves. If one of the partners has a disease, it is passed on to the spouse or even to the children. The most effective prevention is using condoms."

(A caption under a photo reads: Dr. Mustafa Torun said that foreign prostitutes have a big effect on the spread of disease.) END TEXT.

[17.](#) Published by Yeni Safak on Sunday, January 29:

TITLE: Prostitution Ring Brought Down

BEGIN TEXT: Operation Orchid. A team from the Sakarya Security Directorate organized an operation called "Orchid" against a prostitution ring in the Karasu district. Forty women, mostly foreign, who were sold to men were caught. Twenty-one organizers, who were caught with these women, were arrested.

3 Police in Gang. It was alleged that three policemen were among the suspects and that an unregistered hunting rifle and cannabis products were seized. Sakarya Security Director Mustafa Aydin said that the operation was international and that there were officials among the arrested. Questioning of the suspects continues. END TEXT.

[18.](#) Published by Cumhuriyet on Sunday, January 29:

TITLE: Blow to Prostitution Sector in Sakarya

BEGIN TEXT: Sixty people, most of them foreign women, were arrested in a prostitution raid in the Karasu region of Sakarya.

Operation Orchid was realized through cooperation between the Sakarya Smuggling and Organized Crime Department and the Karasu Security Directorate and was pre-planned. Sixty people, including foreign female prostitutes and people who worked those women, were arrested. Among the arrested were female prostitutes from Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, as well as Turks. One air gun and some cannabis were seized. END TEXT.

[19.](#) Reported by Reuters News on Monday, January 30:

TITLE: Turkey targets traffickers of women with adverts

BEGIN TEXT: Turkey will launch a media campaign this week to help foreign women, mainly from the former Soviet Union, forced by criminal gangs to work here as prostitutes, organizers said on Monday.

Television and newspaper advertisements will feature children asking, "Have you seen my mother?" to highlight the fact that an estimated one in three foreign prostitutes in Turkey are mothers and also to stress the human dimension of their plight.

The women, many of them from Ukraine and Moldova, are usually conned by gangs into coming to Turkey to work because they have to support families back home. They then have their passports confiscated and are kept virtual prisoners.

"One of the points we are trying to make is that trafficking takes an enormous toll, not just on the individuals but on families and communities," Allan Freedman of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) told Reuters.

"Women with children are especially vulnerable. They are under incredible social pressure to make money for their kids so they become more vulnerable to being trafficked."

IOM experts say the international trafficking of women has become a hugely lucrative industry, worth around \$3.6 billion in Turkey alone.

IOM data showed 469 women were trafficked in 2005 into Turkey, but experts say this probably represents just 10 percent of the real figure. Turkish Interior Ministry data put the number of trafficked women at 243 in 2004.

A woman forced into prostitution would service on average about 15 women a day, at a cost of \$150 per person, the IOM said.

"There is a tremendous amount of money being made in trafficking and nobody knows for sure where the money is going," Freedman said.

TELEPHONE HOTLINE

Last year, Turkey set up a 24-hour telephone hotline to help victims of human trafficking. It is staffed mainly by Russian speakers as language problems are believed to have discouraged women in the past from going to the police.

Three out of every four calls made to the hotline have come from clients of the women who wanted to help them, IOM data showed. Authorities plan to expand the hotline service.

Around a third of the trafficked women in Turkey live in Istanbul, the country's commercial hub. About a quarter live in the Mediterranean resort of Antalya, underlining a close connection between trafficking and tourism.

A large majority of the victims were recruited by citizens of their own countries. Ukraine provided nearly a third of the trafficked women in Turkey, followed by Moldova, Russia and the Turkic-speaking ex-Soviet republics of Central Asia.

The advertising campaign, due to begin on Tuesday, will be financed by the United States. The European Union, which Turkey aims to join, is also providing help to Ankara to tackle human trafficking. END TEXT.

¶10. The following was published by Cumhuriyet on Monday, January 30 in an article on the recent conference on Women and the Alliance of Civilizations held in Istanbul. Marielle Sander-Lindstrom, Chief of Mission of IOM Turkey, was interviewed:

BEGIN TEXT: Cumhuriyet interviewed Marielle Sander-Lindstrom (Turkey's International Office for Migration Chief of Mission) and she said, "Turkey's geographical position is on the illegal migrant route. Women from the former Soviet Bloc, especially, come to Turkey to find work. Many of them fall into the human traffickers' traps, however. The "157" helpline, established in cooperation with the Turkish government, helps women who have fallen into the Mafia's human trafficking trap.

In the one year that I have been in Turkey, I have seen many different characters who have been sheltered. The most interesting is that 70 percent of the calls into the hotline are from men who want to save a woman they know. Essentially, Turkish men value women. END TEXT.

¶11. Published by the Turkish Daily News on Tuesday, January 31:

TITLE: Campaign to reveal impact of human trafficking on children

BEGIN TEXT: The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is launching a public information campaign today that is hoped will raise awareness on the impact that human trafficking has on children, a move inspired by the disquieting fact that one out of three women trafficked into Turkey are mothers.

"Trafficking takes an enormous toll, not just on the woman and girls who have been trafficked to Turkey, but on the children and families they are forced to leave behind," said Marielle Sander-Lindstrom, the IOM's chief of mission in Turkey. "Families and communities are paying an enormous price."

The campaign, which is for the most part made up of a television advertisement to be broadcast on channels throughout Turkey, is part of an anti-trafficking project coordinated by the Turkish government, sponsored by the U.S. government and implemented by the IOM. The advertisement focuses on four children from the former Soviet Union, where most of the victims of human trafficking come from, and their search for their mothers who left for jobs in Turkey.

"One-third of the women trafficked to Turkey are mothers, which means this is not only about individual victims," Allan Freedman of the IOM told the Turkish Daily News. The campaign, which is to be announced to the public at a press conference at the Turkish Foreign Ministry, is aimed at "creating a conversation on what trafficking is about."

Turkey has been a major transit and destination country for human trafficking in recent years, attracting many

women from the former Soviet republics aspiring for jobs and better living standards, many of whom end up enslaved at the hands of human trafficking gangs that force them into sex or servitude.

According to IOM figures, 469 were identified as having been trafficked into Turkey last year, although authorities estimate this could be as little as 10 percent of the real figure.

Media sponsors of the IOM campaign include Kanal D and Star television, as well as film distributor FIDA FILM and the cinema company Sinefekt. Airport authorities in Istanbul, Trabzon and Antalya, as well as municipalities in Istanbul, Ankara, Antalya, Izmir and Trabzon are also providing sponsorship by setting aside billboards for campaign posters. END TEXT.

12. Published by Sabah on Tuesday, January 31:

TITLE: The United Nations' Natasha Report; Traffickers earn 765,000 USD a year from one prostitute.

BEGIN TEXT: The United Nations, in its 2005 prostitution report, reported that victims of sex trafficking can make 765,000 USD by being marketed to 15 men a day at 150 USD each. According to the report, most of the victims are women from Ukraine and Moldova. The mafia makes 360 million dollars from prostitution alone.

The United Nations Human Trafficking Report, to be released today, gives shocking information about women forced into prostitution in Turkey.

According to the report, trafficking in women earns 360 million dollars per year for the mafia. The United Nations' International Organization for Migration (IOM) prepared a report called "Turkey: Trends in Human Trafficking" for its new campaign, which was financed by the U.S. government. The report indicated that more than half the victims of trafficking in Turkey are from Ukraine and Moldova, the rest from the Balkans and neighboring eastern countries. It is interesting to note the details about trafficking in women and prostitution in the United Nations' research. The report indicates there is a social and economic side to human trafficking and that women have earned the mafia millions of dollars.

According to this report, the women make 150 USD a customer and service 15 men per day. This means she earns 2,250 USD a day and 765,000 USD for 340 days, and that most of this money ends up in the hands of the mafia. The total number of victims in Turkey was reported as 4,690 (sic), but it is stressed that this number may represent only 10 percent of the victims. This means the yearly figure is 360 million dollars. According to the UN report statistics, 469 women were conned and kidnapped in Turkey last year. It was noted in the report that IOM helped 220 women to return to their countries and information from them indicated that they came to Turkey to help ensure their children's futures. Most of the women, many who earn less than two dollars a day, were duped into coming with promises of a nanny job.

Thirty-six percent of women are carrying infectious disease.

Women from Moldova, Ukraine and Russia come most often to Turkey and enter through Istanbul and Antalya.

Forty percent of the kidnapped women forced into prostitution are mothers whose children are threatened with death if the women do not comply.

In a survey of 117 rescued Moldovan women, emotional and physical effects have taken their toll. According to the survey, 36 percent of the women have gynecological communicable diseases and 31 percent have had damage to their reproductive organs. END TEXT.

13. Reported by Milliyet on Tuesday, January 31:

TITLE: One billion dollars earned from human trafficking. Report reveals the amount of money made on Eastern Bloc women forced into prostitution

BEGIN TEXT: The International Office for Migration (IOM), in its report "2005: Turkey, Human Trafficking and Trends," to be released today, stressed that the illegal income generated from human trafficking of people from Moldova and Ukraine and from other old Eastern Bloc countries, amounts to one billion dollars.

According to information from IOM officials, last year

469 women from Eastern Bloc countries were forced into the sex trade. This number is about ten percent of the number of foreign women who are victims of trafficking. In one year each woman is forced into relations with 15 people and the illegal money made from these all women is more than one billion dollars.

Publicity films. In order to raise sympathy with the Turkish public, an IOM-made and Kanal D and Star TV-sponsored film entitled "Have You Seen My Mother" will be shown free of charge on 26 television stations.

The film shows four Moldovan children of victims of trafficking looking for their mothers, and, according to IOM Chief of Mission Marielle Sander-Lindstrom, "Human trafficking does not just affect these women; at the same time it affects the children and families who were left behind. Families are paying a high price." END TEXT.

114. Published by Radikal on Tuesday, January 31:

TITLE: Let us save mothers in trouble

BEGIN TEXT: The United Nations' International Office for Migration, which put the 157 hotline into operation in May 2005, in order to raise more interest in the hotline, has now released a film entitled "Have You Seen My Mother."

IOM, which has saved 52 women from the hands of human traffickers with the 157 hotline, revealed that one of every three women is a mother. IOM, in order to raise more interest in the hotline is using the "mother" element, and is cooperating with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to start a new public awareness campaign.

Four Moldovan children. The first part of the campaign was to use four Moldovan children in the film "Have You Seen My Mother." The four children, whose mothers are victims of trafficking, give the following messages: "I miss her," "I do not know where she is," "We needed to eat," "One of us needed to work and my mother went," "Have you seen my mother?" The film, which will be shown on 26 television channels, got clearance from the government. The film will also be shown during the pre-film commercials in cinemas. Posters advertising the film are in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Antalya and Trabzon bus stops and on billboards at airports.

Selin Arslan, IOM's Information Officer, said, "The number of victims of trafficking in Turkey has reached three thousand. Forty percent of the kidnapped women are forced to work in Istanbul, 16 percent in Antalya and Ankara. Women from Ukraine, Moldova and Russia use the 157 hotline most often. Twenty-six percent of the callers to the 157 hotline are victims, while 74 percent are friends or customers of the victims. We are waiting for help from the public.

"They so scare the women they force into prostitution that the women are afraid to call us. There is a shelter in Istanbul and one to be opened in Ankara." (Note: The shelter in Ankara opened at the end of October, 2005. End Note.)

WILSON